

Central team arrives in Tiruchi to assess the damage to crops

Collector gives a power-point presentation to team members



Going on record:Collector apprising the team members of the damage to crops in Tiruchi district on Monday.

The Central team on a visit to Tamil Nadu to assess the damage to agricultural crops in delta districts arrived in Tiruchi on Monday.

At Tiruchi airport, Collector Jayashree Muralidharan received the team led by Manash Choudhuri, deputy advisor, Agriculture Division, Planning Commission, New Delhi.

Other members in the team comprise K. Manoharan, director (in-charge), Directorate of Tobacco Development,

Chennai; V. Srikanth, deputy director, Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance; P.J. Jose, deputy secretary, Ministry of Power; and superintending engineer (coordination), Cauvery Southern Rivers Organisation, Central Water Commission.

Senior State bureaucrats Rajiv Ranjan, principal secretary, Revenue; Sandeep Saxena, principal secretary, Agriculture; and Selvaraj, Director of Town Planning, accompanied the central team. Commissioner of Rural Development Vijayakumar arrived by road, district administration sources said.

Through a power-point presentation, the Collector apprised the team at the Circuit House of the damage to crops in Tiruchi district.

On Tuesday, the team will visit Thanjavur and other delta districts after assessing the damage to crops in Tiruverumbur block in Tiruchi district.

Rs. 984.70-crore package to boost agriculture production

Chief Minister announces separate allocations for different segments

Chief Minister Jayalalithaa on Monday unveiled a Rs. 984.70-crore package to give a stimulus to agriculture production, taking into account the shrinkage of

cultivated land and to ensure that farmers got a fair price for their produce.

Making a *suo motu* statement in the Assembly, the Chief Minister announced separate allocations for different segments of agriculture.

One of her announcements was for purchase of 700 Rain Gun and Mobile Sprinklers at a cost of Rs. 57 crore. These machines will be used for effective utilisation of water from farm ponds being dug in all districts to ensure water supply in seasons of inadequate rain. A total of 15,000 farm ponds are being dug in the delta districts, and another 56,000 ponds in other districts.

As agriculture production was likely to go down in the wake of reduction in the area of cultivated land, around 12,500 acres of arid land in the State would be made into cultivable by providing water facilities.

The government would provide Rs. 4000 per acre as back-end subsidy and supply inputs at a subsidised rate.

The State will have an express mission mode approach at three levels – village, taluks and districts – to foster increase in the cultivation of paddy, millets and cereals. Millet cultivation in the State had come down substantially in the last three decades.

To meet protein requirements, red gram will be cultivated on 50,000 acres. The government will spend Rs. 55.60 crore to provide drip irrigation to 10,000 acres under red gram cultivation.

Ms. Jayalalithaa said sugarcane production would be increased through implementation of a sustainable sugarcane initiative on 50,000 acres. The project cost is Rs. 275.20 crore and will be done through sugar mills.

The Chief Minister said a special purpose vehicle would be launched to ensure that quality agricultural and horticultural inputs were available for farmers. The total cost for the scheme is Rs. 112.49 crore.

She said her government was taking efforts to mechanise agricultural operations as the farm sector could not provide sustained income and the people from rural areas were migrating to towns. This year also government would purchase farm machines at a cost of Rs. 124.70 crore.

The government also decided to set up service centres in 50 taluks at a cost of Rs. 28.25 crore to provide counselling on horticultural crop technology

A special commercial complex for tender coconut in Coimbatore district, special complex for banana in Tirunelveli district, approach roads for 10 regulated markets and new regulated markets in Bodinayakanur and Muthukalathur are other announcements.

A mission to make a difference in farmers' lives

A group of students on 25-day 'yatra' to educate ryots with new technologies to enhance yield of crops



Mission with a vision: A team of engineering graduates and students on a 1600-km yatra in a solar car designed by them to popularise innovative applications in agriculture, in Visakhapatnam on Monday.- Photo: By Arrangement

With confidence writ large on their faces, a group of engineering graduates and students from the State have undertaken a 25-day 'yatra' covering seven agro-climatic zones of Andhra Pradesh in a solar car designed by them to popularise innovative technologies/practices in agriculture.

Christened 'Krishi Yatra', the youngsters during their journey will be touching 450 villages in nine districts. They will interact with farmers and various government agencies and explain to them on how to make use of solar energy and several other affordable technologies to increase agricultural yield. "Our focus will be on sustainable development through green technologies and

mechanisms”, Jignesh Talasila, a product of GITAM University and one of the team members, told *The Hindu* .

www.krishiyatra.org

Active on social media to popularise their ideas and to get connected with like-minded friends, they have created their website www.krishiyatra.org and a page facebook.com/krishiyatra. The team members have either finished engineering or are studying at NIT-Warangal, IIIT-Hyderabad, SRM University, VIT and GITAM University.

‘Yatra’ was flagged off

The ‘yatra’ was flagged off at Venkojipalem junction here on Monday. It will culminate at Tirupati on May 31. The members of the group will join the 1600-km ‘yatra’ in batches. The four-wheeler two-seater car propelled by twin motors of an electric bike will carry solar panels on its top. It was designed and fabricated by the team in just five days. “We will also tell the progressive farmers as to how, with slight modifications, they can use a car made like ours with less than Rs.1 lakh investment for transporting their produce and spraying and ploughing”, Mr. Jignesh said.

Pass through 9 districts

The team will traverse through Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Khammam, Nalgonda, Mahabubnagar, Kurnool, Anantapur and Kadapa districts and wind up the yatra at Tirupati on May 31.

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- *Christened 'Krishi Yatra', the youth will cover 1600-km in 450 villages in nine districts*
 - *They will explain to farmers, government agencies how to make use of solar energy and other tech*
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Drought-hit farmers urged to open bank accounts

A special meeting was convened here on Monday to ensure prompt disbursal of drought relief to farmers who suffered losses due to monsoon failure last year.

Collector Ashish Kumar, who presided over the meeting, appealed to the farmers, who did not maintain bank accounts, to open new accounts either in cooperative or nationalised banks at the earliest.

Drought relief amounting to over Rs.103 crore was extended to Tuticorin district based on the assessment by a high-level team from the state government.

Around 1,95,000 farmers are eligible to receive relief in the district. Meanwhile, the Collector instructed the officials concerned to submit the number of the existing bank accounts to primary agriculture cooperative banks to extend the relief.

K.P.Perumal, a farmer, said a list of farmers entitled to receive relief amount should be displayed at government

offices. The Collector replied that the list would be displayed at the Collector's office, Block Development Officer's office, Taluk office, Village Administrative Officer's office, Cooperative banks, societies and also posted on district web site.

V. Ganapathi Raman, a farmer from Masarpatti, said proper planning should be drawn up for disbursing the aid to a group of farmers, who own patta lands jointly.

Earlier, S. Gengaraj, Joint Director of Animal Husbandry, explained the new Green Fodder Development scheme launched by the Department of Animal Husbandry with farmers to raise cultivation of fodder crop in the wake of drought-hit conditions.

Eight hundred acres were earmarked to raise the fodder crop and cattle feed in the district in 2013-14. By means of power point, Dr. Gengaraj highlighted the expenditure on field preparation, fertilizers, seeds and sowing, weeding, labour cost and different methods of irrigation on fields.

The short-term crop could be cultivated in 60 days, he said.

D. Ranjith Sigh Dhanraj, Joint Director of Agriculture, Pandian, Joint Registrar of Cooperatives, M. Kanagaraj, Personal Assistant to Collector (Agriculture), and others attended.

Farmers try to lay siege to collectorate, held

About 100 farmers from Thathayarkulam, who had come in tractors to lay siege to the collectorate here on Monday, were arrested. They urged the government to allow them to desilt water bodies in their area. They said contractors should not be allowed to carry out the work. The agitation, launched at Thathayarkulam, was led by Chairman of Kodayar Irrigation Project A.Vins Anto.

Farmers dismayed over erratic power supply

Farmers in Karur district have alleged that the Tangedco is short circuiting them by providing three-phase power supply for agricultural purposes for only three hours in a day. It's also being done in an erratic manner without prior notice leaving them in the lurch, some farmers rue.

Already rains have deceived us and the rivers have deserted us during the most crucial of periods in irrigating the standing crops. Cash crops such as banana, sugarcane, turmeric and betel vine and food crops such as paddy and millets have been hugely affected by the deficient help from Mother Nature.

The farmers were depending on lift irrigation for saving their standing according to Sugar Cane Growers' Welfare Association president Nachalur Anbalagan.

But the curse of power scarcity followed the farmers from the last year to 2013 as well with much of the time being spent in the hope of getting power to irrigate the withering crops.

We hear that industries are getting at least 12 hour power supply during a day and we are at a loss to grasp why we are being denied even three hours of three-phase power supply during the day time and an equal duration during the nights? asks S. Muthusamy Gounder of Mangasolipalayam. We too have our produce to account for and stomachs to feed , he queries.

The Tangedco authorities announced a schedule of three phase power supply lasting just three hours a day but are not following even that timing in some places. We farmers are forced to wait for the supply to resume at the appointed hour but are disappointed time and again as the sudden variation in schedule upsets our other chores , points out working president of the Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association Mahadanapuram V. Rajaram.

The officials must ensure that three hours of continuous three-phase agricultural power supply must be maintained at any cost to salvage what ever is left of the fields, Mr. Rajaram says.

16 automatic weather stations to guide farmers installed

Sixteen automatic weather stations have been set up by the Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council Keralam (VFPCCK) across the State. Six more stations will be established in the coming months by VFPCCK, with a view to augmenting the horticulture development mission undertaken by it.

The stations have been set up in all districts except Alappuzha and Palakkad, a top official of VFPCCK told *The Hindu*. They are intended to provide data on climate which will indicate the changes in weather patterns that could affect yield. The information could also be used as a precautionary mechanism against vagaries of nature in order to minimise damage to crops.

The automatic stations, imported after floating tenders, provide data on temperature, rainfall, wind velocity, wind direction, relative humidity, soil temperature and moisture. Each weather station has equipment such as rain gauge, relative humidity sensor, solar radioactive sensor, wind speed and direction sensor, datalogger and modem.

The readings, obtained at intervals of half an hour, are transmitted to the main computer server at the VFPCCK headquarters in Kochi. Each station costs around Rs.4.5 lakh.

The first batch of four stations became operational in December last. All the monitoring stations are functioning now, with the latest batch starting operation a fortnight ago, the official said. The process of analysing the readings is being taken up in association with scientists and researchers of farm varsities. It will take some time before arriving at conclusions which could be passed on to farmers and self-help groups engaged in production of fruits and vegetables.

The weather stations are located at places away from the Indian Meteorological Department observation sites, the official said. Each station is established in a 16 square metre area. Some of the stations are located in VFPCCK owned land. The locations were selected by a committee under government guidance, the official said. Drought, flood and wind often hit farmers hard and the losses have been increasing each year. In a memorandum submitted to the Central team which visited Kerala to assess drought, the State had sought Rs.5,000 crore as compensation for crop loss.

The stations will provide farmers data on weather patterns that could affect yield.

Farmers lay siege to Markfed office seeking MSP, arrested

Ten lakh quintals of blackgram is with ryots, but no procurement centre set up



In protest mode:Blackgram farmers staging a dharna at Markfed Office in Vijayawada on Monday.—Photo: Ch.Vijaya Bhaskar

Black gram farmers under the aegis of Andhra Pradesh Rytu Sangham lay siege to Markfed Office here and came on to the roads demanding that the Government provide Minimum Support Price (MSP) for their produce.

Farmers raised blackgram in four lakh acres, and 10 lakh quintals of stocks are with the growers in Krishna district. But, government is not taking any measures to take up the produce and the middlemen are purchasing the stocks at fewer prices, the farmers alleged.

On Monday, farmers from Vuyyuru, Pamarru, Ghantasala, Gudivada, Machilipatnam and other mandals staged a dharna before the Markfed Office, at Benz Circle.

When the officers did not respond to their agitation, they staged a 'rasta roko' on the main road causing traffic jam.

Suppressing voice

The Patamata police rushed to Benz Circle centre and arrested the agitating farmers.

They bundled the ryots into their vehicles and shifted them to the police station. Farmers alleged that the Government was trying to suppress their voice with the police forces.

Andhra Pradesh Rytu Sangham State president Vangala Subba Rao, Krishna District president Y. Keshava Rao, vice-presidents Y. Narasimha Rao and T.V. Laxmana Swamy, general secretary J. Prabhakar and some farmers were among the arrested.

Speaking on the occasion, a farmer Raavi Subba Rao of Daliparru village said the government assured to take the produce at Rs.4,300 per quintal and arranged a procurement centre at Vuyyuru. But, the centre was closed after a few days benefiting the middlemen.

“Brokers are buying black gram at Rs.3,500 per bag and are selling the same at higher price. We took the matter to the notice of the local minister, but of no use”, said Subba Rao. “Government is chanting the name of 'anna datalu' every day and are claiming that the State and Central Governments are farmer-friendly. But, the situation is different in villages and the statements of the public representatives are limited to newspapers only”.

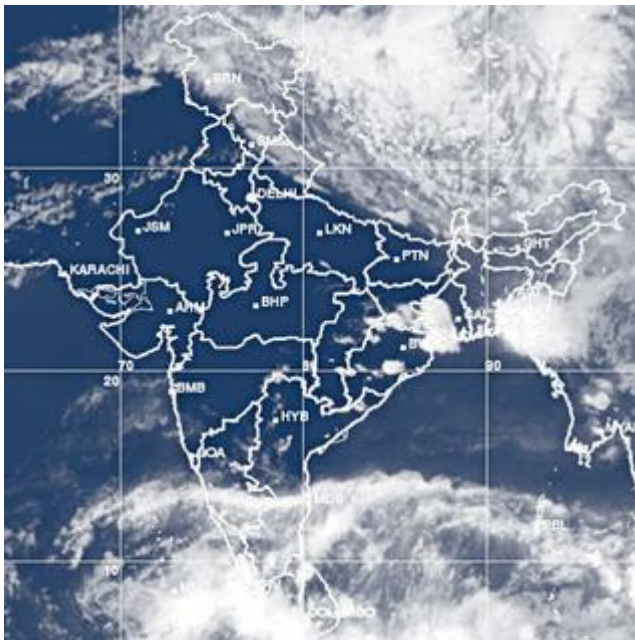
“We request the government to set up black gram procurement centres at Gannavaram, Gudivada, Machilipatnam and Avanigadda mandals besides opening the stall at Vuyyuru”, said another black gram farmer Talasila Parameswara Rao of Ghantasala mandal.

• ***Government assures to take the produce at***

Rs. 4, 300 per quintal

• ***State urged to set up blackgram procurement centres***

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on May 6th.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	43	26	0	26
New Delhi (Sfd)	42	26	0	22
Chandigarh	39	29	0	26

Hissar	43	22	0	41
Bhuntar	27	12	3	142
Shimla	27	16	0	113
Jammu	39	27	0	36
Srinagar	18	9	5	178
Amritsar	41	23	0	10
Patiala	40	27	0	25
Jaipur	42	29	0	15
Udaipur	39	23	0	15
Allahabad	46	22	0	11
Lucknow	40	24	0	1
Varanasi	42	25	0	21
Dehradun	37	22	0	39
Agartala	29	20	65	285
Ahmedabad	41	27	0	6
Bangalore	35	24	0	39
Bhubaneshwar	39	28	0	52
Bhopal	43	27	0	53
Chennai	38	28	0	32
Guwahati	29	20	28	169
Hyderabad	40	27	0	51
Kolkata	35	29	0	32
Mumbai	33	27	0	0
Nagpur	45	30	0	24
Patna	36	24	0	14
Pune	39	23	0	3
Thiruvananthapuram	33	26	0	157
Imphal	25	16	34	240
Shillong	21	11	8	132

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (tr-trace) and total rainfall in mm since 1st March.

RAIN AT FEW PLACES

RAINFALL: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at many places over Jammu and Kashmir, at few places over Himachal Pradesh. Weather was mainly dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are:
JAMMU AND KASHMIR:Qazigund 2 , Pahalgam and Kukarnag 1 each, **HIMACHAL PRADESH:** Kalpa and Keylong 1 each.

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES: The maximum temperatures fell appreciably in Jammu and Kashmir and changed little elsewhere. They were appreciably above normal in Haryana, above normal in Punjab, east Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, appreciably below normal in Jammu and Kashmir and normal in rest of the region. The highest maximum temperature in the region was 46.3°C recorded at Allahabad (Uttar Pradesh).

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 08th May 2013: Rain/thundershowers may occur at a few places over Jammu and Kashmir during next 24 hours and at one or two places thereafter. Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over Himachal Pradesh. Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over Uttarakhand during next 24 hours mainly dry weather thereafter. Weather would be mainly dry over rest of the region.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 08th May 2013: Partly cloudy sky becoming mainly clear sky.

Water level

: The water level in the Periyar dam stood at 112.50 feet (the permissible level is 136 feet) with an inflow of 100 cusecs and a discharge of 100 cusecs on Monday. The level in the Vaigai dam was 35.83 feet with no inflow and a discharge of 60 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 1,918 mcft. There was no rain in the region.

: Water level in the Papanasam dam on Monday stood at 56.35 feet (the maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 141.26 cusecs and 604.75 cusecs was discharged. The level in the Manimuthar dam stood at 82.03 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 11 cusecs and 85 cusecs was discharged.



Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Rain: 0

Humidity: 79

Wind: normal

Tuesday, May 7

Max Min
34° | 28°

Sunrise: 05:45

Sunset: 06:25

Barometer: 1007

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, May 8

Max Min
37° | 29°

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday
May 9



36° | 28°

Partly Cloudy

Friday
May 10



38° | 28°

Overcast

Saturday
May 11



38° | 28°

Overcast

Sunday
May 12



38° | 29°

Overcast

Monday
May 13



40° | 30°

Overcast

State reaps Maharashtra farmer harvest

Maharashtra, notorious for farmer suicides and irrigation losses over the last few years, has sprouted a surprise. It has added more farmers in the last decade than any other state, shows Census findings released last week.

The state has gained over seven hundred thousand cultivators since 2001 in sharp contrast to national trends that saw India's farmer population decline by nearly nine million. Even leading agricultural states like MP, UP, Punjab and AP have witnessed a drop in their population of cultivators. (see box)

Maharashtra has added 0.76 million cultivators and 2.67 million agricultural labourers in the last decade, says the Census 2011 findings. Rajasthan is the only other major state to have added farmers.

The findings are surprising as the state has witnessed two major droughts during the decade, one in 2002 followed by the current dry spell since 2011. An increase in the number of farmers also doesn't

necessarily indicate a healthy agricultural sector, point out economists, who believe this trend in Maharashtra is yet another indication of distress in the state.

Economist Abhay Pethe, who has been studying the socio-economic profile of Maharashtra, is surprised as agriculture, including allied activities, contributed a mere 12.4% to the gross state domestic product in 2011-12. He believes the increase could reflect a form of disguised unemployment. "It's likely that many villagers report themselves as farmers because they have no non-farm employment. Other states have been better at providing employment under government programmes such as the NREGS which could contribute to such disparity."

Economist Abhay Pethe says it is possible that many villagers are calling themselves farmers because they have no non-farm employment. He also feels much of the increase reported in the number of cultivators as well as farm hands could be in vineyards or fruit orchards rather than in traditional cereals and millet crops such as wheat, paddy, jowar or ragi.

His views are corroborated by Ulka Mahajan of the Anna Adhikar Abhiyan who works closely with farming communities in Raigad district. "Many industrial estates and smaller units in the state have shut down in

the last decade forcing villagers back to their villages. While agricultural land holding might not have increased over the years, the dependence on agriculture has definitely increased."

The Census defines cultivators as those who are directly engaged in the cultivation and supervision of land, and labourers as those who work on land owned by others for wages.

The state's agricultural data reflects this gloom in many ways, even as it hints at an increase in crop yields. There has been no agricultural expansion in the last 10 years. The area under cultivation for principal crops has shrunk from around 400 lakh hectares in 2000-01 to 392 lakh hectares a decade later. Crop yields have, however, correspondingly increased from 800 lakh tonnes to 1,340 lakh tonnes.

Agricultural economist Devinder Sharma points to another possible scenario. He explains that cities like Mumbai and Pune which were traditional job magnets have possibly saturated their capacity to provide jobs and people in Maharashtra have no other avenues left but to return to their farms. Other states have had a later start. "Agriculture is considered the lowest economic activity and an increase in farmers merely means the state is witnessing jobless growth."

Maharashtra's farmer gain

2001/ 2011 / Increase in number of farmers between
2001-11

Number of cultivators in Maharashtra (in million)
11.8/ 12.6 /0.7

Number of agricultural labourers 10.8 /13.5 / 2.6

Maharashtra gains farmers while other agri states lose

Area // Cultivators// Agricultural labourers // Total
agricultural workers as a % of total workers

2001/ 2011 // 2001 / 2011// 2001 /2011

India // 127.3/ 118.7// 106.8/ 144.3 // 58.2/ 54.6

Maharashtra // 11.8/ 12.6 //10.8/ 13.5 // 55.0 / 52.7

Punjab // 2.1/ 1.9// 1.5/ 1.6 // 38.9 / 35.6

Uttar Pradesh // 22.2/ 19.1 // 13.4/ 19.9 // 65.9/ 59.3

[Madhya Pradesh](#) // 11.0 /9.8// 7.4/ 12.2 // 71.5/ 69.8

Andhra Pradesh // 7.9/ 6.5//13.8/ 17.0 // 62.2/ 59.5

Haryana // 3.0 / 2.5// 1.3/ 1.5 // 51.3 / 45.0

Bihar// 8.2/ 7.2// 13.4/ 18.3 // 77.3/ 73.6

(Source: Census of India, 2011)

Stagnant agricultural sector

Category 2000-01 // 2010-11

Total area under principal crops (in thousand hectares): 40,085// 39,238

Production of principal crops (in thousand tonnes):
80,063 //1,34,032

Net area sown (area in '000 hectare)// 17,844 //
17,406

Gross cropped area 21,619 // 23,175

(Source: Economic Survey of Maharashtra 2012-13)

Tamil Nadu vet varsity to get stem cell research centre

CHENNAI: The [Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University](#) will soon undertake [research work](#) in [stem cells](#) for livestock in collaboration with Michigan State University, Virginia Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine and Wakeforest Institute of Regenerative Medicine.

Making a statement in the assembly, chief minister J Jayalalithaa on Monday said the stem cell research unit would be the first of its kind in the country. It will entail an expenditure of 6.48 crore.

"The government has decided to set up the stem centre at Tamil Nadu Veterinary Univesity considering the benefits the stem cell research will bring to human health in the future," she said. Jayalalithaa said that regenerative medicine, a new medical procedure, would also be implemented in the state to prevent and protect livestock from various diseases. Regenerative medicine is the process of replacing stem cells to restore or establish normal function in human beings and animals. Stem cells are sourced from bone

marrow, placenta and fat tissue in animals and human beings are used in regenerative medicine.

For providing treatment to livestock on par with human beings, 53 ultra sound scan machines will be installed at 22 veterinary hospitals, 20 livestock development and feed centres and 11 livestock farms at a cost of 8.81 crore, she said.

Jayalaithea also announced a series of welfare measures for farmers, including setting up 47 agriculture product's storage godowns, upgradation of barren lands to farm areas, establishing farmers service centres at various districts besides creating district horticulture technology base centres. She told assembly that works were currently on to implement initiatives for the effective usage of water during non-rainy season. She said a total of 700 rain gun and mobile sprinklers will be acquired at a cost of 57 crore and will be provided two each to 350 blocks. The chief minister said a special commercial complex for tender coconuts would be set up in Coimbatore and a banana special commercial complex would be established in Tirunelveli at a cost of 23.60 crore.

State revenue minister Thoppu N D Venkatachalam said the government has instructed all district collectors and revenue officials to take immediate steps

to issue community certificate to scheduled tribes. A special attention motion was moved by opposition members regarding non-issuance of ST community certificates to children in Vellore, Thiruvallur and Madurai.

Temperature expected to peak in coming weeks

COIMBATORE: While temperatures are set to soar in the coming weeks, the summer rain is expected to bring some relief from the scorching heat.

V Geethalakshmi a faculty at the [Agro-Climate Research Centre](#) at the [Tamil Nadu Agricultural University](#) (TNAU) said the average temperature for the coming three weeks in the region will be around 37 degree Celsius. "It may go up to 39 degree Celsius," she said. Sporadic rains are also expected simultaneously, she said, although it is difficult to predict.

On Saturday, the temperatures in most parts were very high but brief rains across the region helped bring down the heat marginally. Because of the continuous heat, the relief will only be short-lived experts said. "When it rains, the temperatures will come down for a

day, but will soar again very quickly," she said.

Farmers in the region fear it will affect their crops. They are already facing a tough situation due to scanty rains. "Many fields have been dried up in the summer heat. We are afraid that our crops will wither in the coming weeks," said Vazhukkuparai Balu the president of a farmers' association in the region.

Meanwhile, department sources said the lack of tree cover had caused an increase in the temperatures in the region. A comparative analysis done by the department on temperatures recorded from 1953 to 2012 during March, April and May shows there has been an increase in temperatures in the last few decades, said N Maragatham, the head of the department.

"Felling of trees, increased pollution and [real estate](#) development are factors that have contributed to the rising temperatures," she said. Though the changes have been gradual, it is an alarming trend. Decrease in the area of agricultural cultivation also has contributed to this trend, she added.

Market pulse for key agro commodities: Mangal Keshav

India's total food grain production is likely to be 255.36mn tons, well above the second estimate of 250.14mn tons, as per the third food grain advance estimates of 2012-13.

Arrivals of chilli crop declined to below 0.4-0.42lakh bags while demand too has eased at Guntur market in expectation that prices would decline further. Spot rates were quoted around '53-'58 per kg based on crop quality, as per trade reports.

Arrivals of jeera crop increased 18,000-20,000 bags & the same were traded at auctions held at Unjha market. Spot rates were steady & quoted around '122-'123 per kg while exchange quality crop was offered at '132-'133 per kg, as per local traders.

Spot rates of pepper garbled were steady at '356 per kg and that of un-garbled was unchanged at '341 per kg while arrivals declined to 75 tons & trades too were down at 78 tons at auctions held at

Kochi market, as per IPSTA.

Arrivals of turmeric crop were unchanged at 15,000 bags at Nizamabad market, ~5,000 bags each across mandis of Erode & at Sangli market. Spot rates were unchanged at '53-'55 per kg, as per local traders.

Average price of small cardamom declined to '588.7 per kg while maximum price offered was down at '855 per kg, as per spice board.

Total inflow of small cardamom crop increased to 86.5 tons from which ~86 tons were sold at KCPMC auction held at Thekkady.

Arrivals of Soya bean crop increased to about 2,000 bags at mandis of Indore & more than 0.6lakh bags at MP market while supply was steady ~0.15-0.2lakh bags each across mandis of Rajasthan & Maharashtra, as per local traders.

Spot rates of Soya bean seed Indore (ex-mandi) closed at '39 per kg while that of Mustard seed Rajasthan closed at '32.25 per kg, as per SEA of India.

Inflow of mustard seed crop increased to 87,768 quintals, while average of closing spot rates were down at '3,023.5per quintal, as per agriculture marketing board of Rajasthan.

Chana futures remained under selling pressure, due to heavy supply across major mandis while demand remains steady among local buyers.

Mentha oil futures continued their bearish trend last week closing in negative for the 10th consecutive week while spot rates too have declined in same period, mainly due to higher productions estimates, dull demand & steady supply across major trading centers on a daily basis.

India's total food grain production is likely to be 255.36mn tons, well above the second estimate of 250.14mn tons, as per the third food grain advance estimates of 2012-13. In 2011-12, India had produced 259.32mn tons of food grains.

Refined soya oil up 0.19% on spot demand

Analysts attribute rise in futures market to higher offtake during the ongoing marriage season



Refined soya oil gained 0.19 per cent to Rs 676.20 per 10 kg in futures trade today as speculators enlarged their positions on pick up in spot demand due to ongoing marriage season.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, refined soya oil for delivery in July was up Rs 1.25, or 0.19 per cent, to Rs 676.20 per 10 kg, with an open interest of 40,110 lots.

The June contract gained Rs 1.20, or 0.17 per cent, to Rs 693.50 per 10 kg in 82,250 lots.

Analysts attributed the rise in refined soya oil futures to pick up in demand in the spot market due to ongoing marriage season.

Chana sheds 0.57% on subdued demand, increased supply

Traders reduce positions on fresh arrivals from key growing areas



Chana prices lost 0.57 per cent to Rs 3,490 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators reduced their positions, triggered by a weak spot market demand against rising supplies of new crop.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, chana for June contract fell by Rs 20, or 0.57 per cent, to Rs 3,490 per quintal, with an open interest of 1,28,200 lots.

The May contract lost Rs 15, or 0.44 per cent, to Rs 3,408 per

quintal in 39,010 lots.

Market analysts attributed the fall in chana futures to speculators reduced their positions, triggered by a weak demand in the spot market against rising supplies from the new season crop.

Chilli down 2% on weak demand, large stocks

Prices weaken on lower exports, rising inventory amid reports of higher output



Chilli prices fell by Rs 132 to Rs 5,900 per quintal in futures trade today, following on speculators buying driven by falling spot market demand amid reports of higher output.

Marketmen said chilli prices weakened due to lower export, good stocks position and sluggish domestic demand amid reports of higher output.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chilli prices for June slumped by Rs 132, or 2.19 per cent, to Rs 5,900 per quintal, with an open interest of 19,980 lots.

The July contract also shed Rs 132, or 2.14 per cent, at Rs 6,030 per quintal, having an open interest of 3,150 lots.

Turmeric tumbles over 3% on supply pressure

Increased supplies from new season crops, slackened export demand take toll on turmeric in futures trading



Turmeric prices declined by 3.33 per cent to Rs 6,220 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators trimmed their positions, triggered by increased supplies from the new season crop in the spot markets

Besides, subdued overseas demand also weighed on the turmeric prices.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, turmeric for delivery in June month fell sharply by Rs 214, or 3.33 per cent to Rs 6,220 per quintal with an open interest of 28,440 lots.

May turmeric traded Rs 194, or 3.07 per cent lower at Rs 6,120 per quintal in an open interest of 2,930 lots.

Market analysts said adequate stocks in the spot markets following increased supplies from the new season crop and slackened export demand mainly kept pressure on the turmeric prices at futures trade.

Soyameal exports down 70% on weak global demand

Shipments stood at 100,000 tonnes in April 2013 compared with 336,000 tonnes a year ago



The country's soyabean meal exports fell by 70 per cent to 1,00,000 tonne in April due to sluggish global demand, industry body SOPA said today.

Shipments of soyabean meal, used as animal feed, stood at 336,000 tonnes in the same month last year.

Exports fell as "the Indian soybean meal prices are not competitive in comparison to international rates," Indore- based Soyabean Processors Association of India (SOPA) said in a statement.

Till April of the 2012-13 oil year (October-September), the soyameal exports have declined by 13.60 per cent to 2.69 million tonnes as against 3.12 million tonnes in the same period.

Castorseed slips more than 1% on selling pressure

Weak physical markets due to higher arrivals take toll on the commodity

Castorseed prices fell by Rs 46 to Rs 3,578 per quintal in future trade today on speculators selling in line with weak physical markets cue.

Marketmen said tracking weak physical markets cue on increased arrivals and slackness in demand, speculators indulged in booking profits.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, castorseed for August delivery dipped by Rs 46, or 1.27 per cent to Rs 3,578 per quintal in open interest of 15,720 lots.

The most active June contract plunged by Rs 41, or 1.19 per cent, to Rs 3,392 per quintal, having an open interest of 1,54,800 lots.

The May contract shed Rs 36, or 1.08 per cent to Rs 3,287 per quintal in 20,270 lots.

Jeera down 0.7% on profit-booking

However, some export demand limits the decline



Amid profit-booking by speculators, jeera prices fell by 0.69 per cent to Rs 12,970 per quintal in futures market today.

However, some export demand limited the fall.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera for delivery in June fell Rs 90, or 0.69 per cent to Rs 12,970 per quintal with an open interest of 14,496 lots.

The May contract lost Rs 72.50, or 0.56 per cent, to Rs 12,812.50 per quintal in 2,184 lots.

Market analysts attributed the fall in jeera futures to profit-booking but some export demand, restricted the fall.

Maize sheds 2% on aggressive selling

Traders offload positions as global markets slacken and and fresh crops arrive



Maize prices fell by Rs 33 to Rs 1,117 per quintal in futures trade today on the back of lower global markets sentiment.

Marketmen said traders preferred to offload thier holdings after tracking lower international markets cues.

Arrivals of new crops and slackness in demand in physical markets was another weakening factor in maize futures, they said.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, maize price for delivery in month plunged by Rs 33, or 2.97 per cent, to Rs 1,117 per quintal, with an open interest of 50,950 lots.

The May contract shed Rs 22, or 1.96 per cent, to Rs 1,100 per quintal, having an open interest of 4,380 lots.

Coriander slips over 3% on mounting supplies

Traders offload positions as exports slide and stocks pile up



Coriander prices plummeted by Rs 206 to Rs 6,488 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators reduced positions following adequate stocks in the spot market and fall in export.

Marketmen said slide in export demand and mounting stocks in physical markets mainly pulled down coriander prices here in future markets.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, coriander for delivery in May slipped by Rs 206, or 3.08 per cent, to Rs 6,488 per quintal, with an open interest of 6,360 lots.

The June contract plunged by Rs 209, or 3.08 per cent, at Rs 6,585 per quintal, having an open interest of 33,470 lots.

Bihar opens highest number of wheat procurement centres

Bihar has decided to open 8,997 wheat purchasing centres across the state, the highest in the country



After paddy, Bihar has again set an ambitious target to procure wheat from its farmers for the central pool. According to official sources, the state has planned to almost double its wheat procurement for the 2013-14 rabi procurement season to 1.5 million tonnes (mt), as against the earlier procurement of 0.8 mt. However in the current season, Bihar is yet to procure any. Even last year, till the beginning of May nothing was procured.

"We believe that wheat procurement in Bihar starts a little late than in other parts of the country because of delayed harvest of paddy," a senior Food Corporation of India (FCI) official said. He said Bihar has decided to open 8,997 wheat purchasing centres across the state, the highest in the country.

In the 2012-13 paddy marketing season (starts October), Bihar managed to purchase 2.3 mt till April-end, almost double the

purchase during the same period last year. It set a target of purchasing two mt of paddy from farmers, but exceeded the target in the first six months of the procurement season. In contrast, Uttar Pradesh has set up 5,925 procurement

CATCHMENT AREA			
State	No of procurement centres*	Procurement	
		2012-13**	2013-14**
Bihar	8,997	0	0
Uttar Pradesh	5,925	1.04	0.26
Haryana	372	6.88	5.40
Punjab	1,787	8.55	9.59
Rajasthan	317	0.80	0.62
Madhya Pradesh	2,800	4.82	4.86
Others	-	0.11	2.03
Total	-	22.20	20.76

*As per provisional data provided by the state to the Food Corporation of India
**As of May 1, procurement figures in million tonnes
Source: Food Corporation of India

centres and purchased around 0.3 mt of wheat till the end of April, down from 1.04 mt during the same period last year.

Madhya Pradesh has opened the third highest number of procurement centres in the country at around 2,800 and till April-end purchased 4.86 mt of wheat for the central pool, marginally down from 4.82 mt during the same period last year. In total, the government had planned to purchase 44 mt of wheat for the central pool in 2013-14, but has scaled down the target to around 40 mt because of below-par procurement in UP, Haryana, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

In total, the government had planned to purchase 44 mt of wheat for the central pool in 2013-14 but scaled down the target to 40 mt because of below par procurement in UP, Haryana, Rajasthan and also in Madhya Pradesh.

Oilmeal exports dip as prices remain firm in India

According to data provided by the SEA, oilmeal exports have fallen 51% to 199,168 tonnes in April this year from 403,090 tonnes in April 2012



A sharp fall in oilmeal exports from India is expected to hurt not only traders but also hamper the profitability of crushing mills in the country. According to data provided by the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA), oilmeal exports have fallen 51 per cent to 199,168 tonnes in April this year from 403,090 tonnes in April 2012.

According to the industry body, the sharp fall was mainly due to disparity in crushing and high prices of soybean, which resulted in less availability for export.

Oilmeal exports fell to 4.84 million tonnes (mt) against 5.6 mt in the previous year, a decline of 15 per cent.

"India's soymeal prices have been higher by over \$100 a tonne than in the international market. This hampered overseas demand. Further, the domestic market is not big enough to compensate the

export demand," said Raju Choksi, vice-president (agro-commodities), Anil Nutrients Ltd.

In the domestic market, prices have surged to Rs 35,000 a tonne on ex-Indore basis in April as against Rs 29,000 a tonne in early February.

Choksi said the surge was artificial. "Most crushing mills are closed due to high prices and non-availability of seed. Farmers and traders are holding on to their stocks of soybean in anticipation of a further rise in prices. This is an artificial rally," he said.

South Korea, Vietnam, Japan, Indonesia and Iran, have significantly cut their oilmeal imports due to the price factor. However, Iran, which faces an international trade embargo, will continue to buy large quantities from India.

Insiders maintained such a situation would hurt crushing units badly as fresh crop arrivals will not start before June. "Prices will remain high till the next crop arrives in the market," said market sources.

Most of the crushing mills are located in parts of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat.

THE HINDU Business Line

‘Retailers doing a disservice to farmers by using fruits, vegetables to get consumers’



Grower-friendly: Pradipta K. Sahoo, Business Head (Horticulture), Mother Dairy Fruit and Vegetable Private Ltd. — Kamal Narang

New Delhi, May 6: Safal, the brand from Mother Dairy, is perhaps the largest fruit and vegetable retailer the country.

Started by the National Dairy Development Board, 25 years ago to meet the fruit and vegetable needs of Delhiites, Safal has not been successful in expanding its reach to other States, except for parts of Bangalore. *Business Line* caught up with Pradipta Sahoo, Business Head (Horticulture), Mother Dairy Fruit and Vegetable Private Ltd, to know more about the challenges faced by Safal in the context of global players entering the Indian retail market. Excerpts from an interview:

What does the entry of global retailers like Wal-Mart and Carrefour mean for home brands like Safal?

The large companies are talking of fruit and vegetables retailing mainly to address a couple of stakeholders.

Those who have already entered it are using it as a category to attract footfalls. They buy potatoes at Rs 10 a kg and sell it at Rs 5 to attract consumers, which we cannot afford to do.

We are genuinely working in the interest of farmers. We purchase directly from farmers and payments are directly made into their bank accounts.

Is the entry of big retail chains a worry for you?

The supermarkets are a destination for something else, while our stores are for fruits, vegetables and other daily needs. We are a convenience store and a customer will buy for his core needs or top-up daily needs from us. We are supported by a robust back-end, right from the farmer, and nobody can challenge us on that. I will retain my leadership as long as I operate within this framework. But I am worried about January 26 or August 15 and the 'Sabse Sastha Din' sales. I cannot afford to organise such sales.

Though we used to make losses till three years ago, we have largely stabilised now. This year (2012-13), we will be in the black on a turnover of around Rs 550 crore. Going forward, we expect to build on this turnaround. We have added products such as pulses and rice to our portfolio and will add more.

Is the entry of big retail giants prompting you to change the way you operate or bring in innovations?

We are open to competition. We are watching them closely. We don't see any threat, as many players have entered and exited this segment. You name any player who has cracked the fruit and vegetable space. But the way retailers are using the fruit and vegetables segment as a tactic to attract consumers is a disservice to the farmer. If they want to do this, let them do this in other products. This is a complex, uncertain, ambiguous and volatile category, where not only the price – the maximum retail price, the minimum operating price and procurement price – changes everyday, but also the quality.

For 25 years, we have been working with about 10,000 farmers through some 110 associations across 16 States. We help the farmers with crop planning – helping them grow specific crops in specific periods and also ensure that they follow post-harvest practices to ensure that the quality of produce is maintained.

Twenty five years into existence, what has held you back from expanding to other cities?

We are an institution and any practice that has been evolved in Safal has been promoted across the country. Our experience is that we were much ahead of time. In Delhi NCR, where about 8,000-9000 tonnes of fruits and vegetables are sold everyday, we account for hardly five per cent. We have branched out to Bangalore and have been operating some 30 stores there for the past 10 years, where about 100 tonnes of fruits and vegetables are sold daily. We are increasing our depth and width in Delhi and Bangalore. We plan to set up about 50 more stores in Delhi and 10 more in Bangalore this year.

The structural issues relating to the APMC Mandi system, the aadati system, lack of transparency in pricing and

standards in terms of post-harvest management, considering that the nature of business is highly perishable, are a hindrance to the ramp-up. Three years ago, we had lost confidence, but we now believe that if managed effectively, this business can be profitable.

What has helped raise your confidence levels?

When we reached out to consumers, we found there were issues relating to freshness and food safety. We addressed those issues and also ensured that stores look good when it comes to hygiene and feel. To ensure freshness, we have started direct supplies from farmers in Bhaktawarpur and Hapur around Delhi. We supply the products twice a day to around 400 booths to ensure freshness.

From food safety perspective, we have been promoting carbide-free ripened fruits such as bananas and mangoes. This is reflected in the sales of fruits, which now account for 35 per cent of our total sales against 30 per cent three years ago.

There is also emphasis on visual merchandising and the concessionaries - who run the stores – were trained on this issue. We are on the track to recovery and have been growing about 12 per cent annually.

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37% tea stays unsold at Coonoor sale

Coonoor, May 6: Due to inadequate demand, as much as 37 per cent of the 11-week high offer of 13.70 lakh kg

remained unsold at Sale No: 18 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions despite dropping prices by Rs 3 a kg. Crosshill Estate topped CTC market. “Our broken pekoe, broken orange pekoe small and broken orange pekoe fannings grades topped leaf market each fetching Rs 174 a kg. “In all, our six marks fetched Rs 160 and more for a kg”, Crosshill Operations Head Dinesh Raju told *Business Line*. Homedale Estate tea, topped dust market at Rs 174 a kg. Vigneshwar Estate got Rs 164. In all, 56 CTC marks got Rs 125. Among orthodox teas, Chamraj got Rs 275, Corsley and Kairbetta Rs 178 each, Siruvani Rs 175, Tigerhill clonal Rs 174, Havukkal Rs 173 and Kodanad Rs 172. On the export front, the CIS gave selective support for Rs 80-88.

Spot rubber steady on supply concerns

Kottayam, May 6: Physical rubber prices were firm on Monday.

The market is reported to be moving in tandem with the overall gains in domestic futures. Supply concerns continued to keep the buyers on their toes once the market started to recover from the recent lows.

Sheet rubber increased to Rs 166.00 a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi from Rs 164.50 and Rs 164.00 a kg respectively, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

RSS 4 improved further at its May contracts to Rs 167.50 (Rs 166.94), June to Rs 167.51 (Rs 167.21), July to Rs 165.60 (Rs 165.11), August to Rs 163.00 (Rs 162.95) and

September to Rs 160.80 (Rs 158.43) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. The Tokyo Commodity Exchange remained closed on account of 'substitute Holiday for Children's Day'.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 166.00 (164.50); RSS-5: 162.00 (161); Ungraded: 157.00 (155); ISNR 20: 156.00 (155); and Latex 60%: 104.50 (103.50).

Tobacco Board fixes Karnataka crop at 102 million kg

Bangalore, May 6: The Tobacco Board has increased Karnataka's crop size by four per cent to 102 million kg (mkg) for the crop year 2013-14.

A decision to this effect was taken at the full board meeting held recently. The trade had demanded 112 mkg and growers request was for around 105 mkg.

"Keeping the annual demand projection in mind in addition to companies' interest, we have hiked Karnataka's crop size by four per cent," K. Gopal, Tobacco Board Chairman, told *Business Line*.

"Last year (2012), there was good global demand for Indian crop especially tobacco grown in light soils," he added

The board had fixed 98 mkg for crop year 2012-13 and 100 mkg for crop year 2011-12 for Karnataka, a major producer of flue cured Virginia tobacco after Andhra Pradesh.

The crop is cultivated in about 85,000 hectares and on an average, produces 120 mkg annually.

Tobacco is mainly cultivated in Mysore, Hassan and Shimoga districts.

According to the board's estimates, there are about 40,000 registered growers. B.V. Javare Gowda, President, Karnataka Tobacco Growers Association, said "The board should have fixed much higher crop for Karnataka keeping in mind good planting material available to growers."

"Due to improved farming practices and good climatic conditions, growers are increasingly getting higher yields on their lands every year. For no fault of theirs they shouldn't be penalised," he added.

The growers have also demanded that the Tobacco Board should lower penalty for excess grown tobacco in the State.

"Keeping in mind the ill effect of excess production, we have been appealing to the growers to restrict the crop size as per target by the board," said K.N. Vishakantaiah, Tobacco Board Regional Manager.

"This advise from the board is in the larger interest of tobacco growing community, failing this warning, they will have to face difficulties at the time of marketing their produce and end up not realising remunerative prices," he added.

Higher soya prices drag April oilmeal exports

Mumbai, May 6: Oilmeal exports halved in April to 1,99,168 tonnes against 4,03,090 tonnes during the same period a year ago, largely due to lower crushing on the back of a sharp run up in soyabean prices, according to data released by the Solvent Extractors' Association on Monday.

Soyabean prices rallied to Rs 3,773 a quintal from Rs 3,543 last month on the NCDEX.

Soyabean prices have been moving up steadily in the futures market from Rs 3,200-level since March.

Prices of soyabean and soya oil in the domestic market were rising even as it fell in the international market.

The divergent trend was largely attributed to the robust demand for soya meal coupled with lower soyabean arrivals in the spot market.

The steady rise in the futures market led to farmers holding back their produce expecting higher prices. This pushed up prices in the spot market.

Iran has stepped up oil meal sourcing from India by paying a premium as it faces an economic sanction imposed by the West. This gave a tremendous boost to sentiments, and buyers were willing to pay any price to get the seed in the spot markets.

However, the demand for soya meal declined during the period March-June, while soyabean prices are expected to fall with the harvest in Argentina catching up pace.

Besides, demand from most importing countries of late, has dipped due to the economic slowdown.

IRAN TOP IMPORTER

In April, Iran and South Korea topped the list of oilmeal importing countries, though they placed lower orders compared with last year.

Iran shipped 67,576 tonnes (97,904 tonnes) of oilmeal, down 31 per cent. Of the total imports, soyabean meal accounted for 67,500 tonnes and rapeseed meal was 76 tonnes.

South Korea imported 58,454 tonnes (70,496 tonnes) consisting of 30,408 tonnes of rapeseed meal and castor meal of 28,046 tonnes.

Vietnam, another major market, imported 13,857 tonnes (56,480 tonnes) consisting of 857 tonnes of rapeseed meal and 13,000 tonnes of rice bran extraction. Japan and Indonesia imported 10,141 tonnes (61,169 tonnes) and 7,806 tonnes (36,363 tonnes).

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Cardamom slips below Rs 600 a kg as demand slows

Poor quality of produce hits export purchases



Kochi, May 6: The cardamom market lost its flavour last week as supply outstripped demand at the auctions. Consequently, the individual auction average price dropped to below Rs 600 a kg. Export buying was reportedly slow due to poor quality material. Material arriving at the auction was of inferior quality, market sources told *Business Line*.

The current season has come to an end. The next season is expected to commence with an early crop by mid-June.

Hence, those who are holding carry forward stocks started liquidating on the assumption that the prices may not move up in the coming days but might fall further, they said.

Arrival of 7 mm and above good colour cardamom has declined while the buyers were also limited.

As a result, the prices have slipped to Rs 750-800 a kg from Rs 800-850. Prices of 8 mm bold also declined to Rs

800-850 and arrival of this grade has also dropped significantly, they said.

The individual auction average dropped significantly last week to below Rs 600.

Total arrivals at the Sunday auction held by KCPMC increased to 86.5 tonnes from 69.6 tonnes last week and the entire quantity was sold out, P.C. Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, said.

The maximum price was at Rs 885 and the minimum at Rs 380. The auction average fell to Rs 590 from Rs 624.62 at the previous Sunday auction, he said. Total arrivals and sales during the current season from Aug 1, 2012 to May 5 were at 12,153 tonnes and 11,595 tonnes respectively.

Total arrivals and sales during the corresponding period last year were at 16,874 tonnes and 16,288 tonnes respectively.

The weighted average price as on May 5 stood at Rs 732.34 against Rs 614.01 as on the same date last year.

Prices of graded varieties last week in Rs/kg: AGEB: 840-850; AGB: 600-610; AGS: 590-600 and AGS-1: 560-570.

With good amount of rains in the Kumily and other parts of Idukki district on Sunday the entire main cardamom growing areas have received rains bringing down the temperature.

The plants have received good relief from the dry spell, and as a result an early crop can be expected next season, growers said.

Rice market seen stable on supply curbs



Karnal, May 6: It is hard to anticipate the rice market future at present and it is unlikely to see any major alteration this week and market may continue to rule around current levels, said traders.

Some fresh buying pushed Pusa-1121, Sharbati and PR 14 rice varieties upwards, while all other aromatic and non-basmati rice varieties managed to maintain their previous levels, on Monday.

Amit Chandna, Proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company, told *Business Line* that due to moderate buying a few rice varieties moved up while all other rice varieties ruled firm.

Restricted availability of stocks is also giving good support to the market, he said.

In the physical market, after witnessing a fall last week, Pusa-1121 varieties recovered marginally by Rs 50-100 a quintal. Pusa-1121 (steam) sold at Rs 8,100 while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted at Rs 7,100 .

Pure basmati (raw) continued to rule flat and quoted at Rs 9,000 . Duplicate basmati (steam) traded at Rs 7,100 .

For the brokens of Pusa-1121, Dubar quoted at Rs 4,100, Tibar sold at Rs 4,950 while Mongra was at Rs 3,100 a quintal.

In the non-basmati section, Sharbati and PR14 varieties improved by Rs 50-150 on buying interest.

Though, sentiments are largely positive at present, the market's future is uncertain, said Amit Chandna.

Sharbati (steam) moved up by Rs 100 and quoted at Rs 5,400-5,500, while Sharbati (sela) was at Rs 5,100 , Rs 50 up. PR14 (steam) improved by Rs 150 and sold at Rs 3,350

.

PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 3,400-3,450 while PR-11 (Raw) quoted at Rs 3,100-3,150 . After witnessing a price rise last weekend, Permal ruled flat, Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,600 while Permal (sela) went for Rs 2,470 a quintal.

Sluggish offtake holds soya, oil on leash



Indore, May 6: Both soya oil and soyabean ruled firm on subdued demand in the physical market. Soya refined ruled stable at Rs 695-700 for 10 kg.

Similarly, soya solvent also ruled steady on weak global cues and slack demand in the physical market.

Soya oil on the futures, however, showed a mixed trend with its May and June contracts on the NCDEX closing at Rs 718.50 (down 65 paise) and Rs 692.85 (up 55 paise).

Soyabean also ruled flat at Rs 3,825-3,950 a quintal amid an arrival of 45,000 bags in mandis across Madhya Pradesh. Compared to last week, soyabean prices are ruling stable. However, it is down Rs 100 a quintal, compared to its prices two weeks back.

Soyabean prices about a month back had been ruling at Rs 4,100 a quintal and in the past one month it has declined by almost Rs 150 a quintal. Plant deliveries in soyabean declined marginally to Rs 3,980-4,050 (Rs 3,950-4,090).

Contrary to soybean prices in the physical market, soybean prices in the futures have been witnessing an uptrend with speculators pushing up its prices.

Soyabeans May and June contracts on the NCDEX closed at Rs 4,009 (up Rs 25) and Rs 3,811 a quintal (up Rs 4).

Soya DOC in the domestic market ruled at Rs 34,800-35,000 a quintal on comparatively weak domestic demand, while demand for soyameal in the export market continues to be poor.

Sugar seen ruling at current levels this week



New Delhi, May 6: Sugar prices in most wholesale markets were flat to down on Monday amid thin trade, and overall sentiment remained negative, dealers said. In Delhi and Muzaffarnagar, sugar prices were flat, while the same fell in Kolhapur by Rs 10 a quintal , they said.

“The trading in the market is very thin. However, demand has improved slightly from before but high supplies are keeping prices on check,” a Delhi-based trader said, adding that the price of the sweetener is likely to remain at the current levels for the rest of this week.

High sugar production compared with consumption is also keeping prices at lower levels, the Delhi-based trader said.

According to Indian Sugar Mills Association, mills across the country produced 24.52 million tonnes of sugar in Oct-Apr, compared with an annual consumption of 22-23 mt. The production is lower than last year’s 25.18 mt. Despite a fall in output this year, sugar surplus is higher

as the carryover stock was large and exports deals are elusive.

Sugar futures on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange closed down tracking spot markets. The May contract closed at Rs 2,916 a quintal, down Rs 3 from the previous close, while June ended at Rs 2,957 , down Rs 15.

Spot rates were (Rs/quintal): M-grade: Rs 3,200-3,290; S-grade: Rs 3,190-3,275. Mill delivery: M-grade: Rs 3,090-3,160; S-grade: Rs 3,080-3,150.

Turmeric likely to drop further



Erode, May 6: Turmeric prices and arrivals have dropped due to absence of upcountry orders and cheaper availability of the spice in Assam. As such, traders expect the prices to fall further and improve only from June. The arrival of turmeric bags to the four markets have decreased sharply and also the prices.

“Only 3,200 bags of turmeric arrived for sale in all the four markets on Monday. About 10 or 15 bags of fine varieties of turmeric were sold for Rs 7,764 a quintal against last week’s Rs 7,194,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

The price of the commodity also declined in major markets of Sangli and Nizamabad. The poor quality Assam turmeric is available for Rs 4,000 a quintal and some traders in North India are buying the same for their local needs.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,696-7,695 a quintal; the root variety Rs 4,393-6,389.

Salem Hybrid Crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,796-8,109 and the root variety Rs 5,406-7,206. Of the arrival of 710 bags of turmeric, only 25 per cent stocks were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 6,339-7,784; the root variety Rs 5,500-6,627. Of the 106 bags arrived, 85 were traded.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,583-7,637; the root variety Rs 5,560-6,899. Of the arrival of 306 bags, 246 bags found takers.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 7,169-7,699; the root variety Rs 6,369-6,727. All the 70 bags were sold.
